

ACTION NEA-00

INFO	LOG-00	AGRE-00	AID-00	CA-00	INL-00	USNW-00	EB-00
	EUR-00	E-00	UTED-00	TEDE-00	IO-00	L-00	NSCE-00
	OMB-00	PA-00	PER-00	PM-00	P-00	D-00	SP-00
	SSO-00	SS-00	STR-00	TEST-00	R-00	PMB-00	PRM-00
	G-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/000W			

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R 260908Z APR 04
 FM CPA BAGHDAD
 TO SECDEF WASHDC 0700
 SECSTATE WASHDC 0718
 WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHDC 0685
 CJCS WASHDC
 CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
 INFO AMEMBASSY ROME
 DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC 0016
 USMISSION USUN NEW YORK NY
 AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
 IRAQ COLLECTIVE
 UN SE COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS BAGHDAD 000363

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A
 TAGS: EAID, ETRD, PGOV, IZ
 SUBJECT: CPA 1010: IRAQ FOOD SECURITY UPDATE- APRIL 22,
 2004

1. (SBU) SUMMARY. TRUCKS CARRYING IRAQI FOOD RATIONS CONTINUE TO ENTER THE COUNTRY, AND FOOD IS BEING DISTRIBUTED TO ALL GOVERNORATES. THE LOSS OF OUR AUTHENTICATION AGENT COTECNA AT THE SYRIAN PORT OF AL-WALEED WILL COMPLICATE MATTERS AND REQUIRE ADDITIONAL EFFORT TO REDIRECT CONVOYS. UPGRADES CONTINUE AT UMM QASR PORT; REPAIRS OF EXISTING EQUIPMENT COMBINED WITH ARRIVAL OF NEW LEASED EQUIPMENT WILL INCREASE CAPACITY IN THE SHORT TERM. END SUMMARY.

2. (SBU) DESPITE INCREASED SECURITY CONCERNS IN SEVERAL AREAS OF THE COUNTRY, CONVOYS CONTINUE TO ENTER IRAQ AND FOOD CONTINUES TO BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE IRAQI PEOPLE - INCLUDING THE HOTSPOTS OF NAJAF AND FALLUJAH. COALITION FORCES CONTINUE TO CLOSE THE AL-WALEED, SYRIA BORDER CROSSING DEPENDING ON THE CURRENT THREAT SITUATION. IT IS CLOSED AS OF THIS DATE. IN WESTERN IRAQ, WHILE SEVERAL STRETCHES OF ROAD ARE CONSIDERED 'RED' (HAZARDOUS), CONVOYS

WISHING TO TRAVEL THEM ARE ALLOWED TO DO SO. COALITION FORCES REQUIRE TRUCKS ENTERING FROM SYRIA TO BE INSPECTED BEFORE PROCEEDING, AND AT THIS TIME ARE ONLY ALLOWING FOODSTUFFS AND GRAIN TO PASS. FROM TREBIL ONWARD, THE ROUTE IS CONSIDERED SLIGHTLY LESS HAZARDOUS. THE ROAD FROM BASRAH TO NASARIYAH REMAINS DANGEROUS; COALITION FORCES AND OIL FOR FOOD CONTRACTED SECURITY ARE ESCORTING FOOD CONVOYS USING THIS ROUTE WHERE PRACTICABLE. THE IRAQI MINISTRY OF TRADE CONTINUES TO DELIVER FOOD TO ALL AREAS OF THE COUNTRY: A CONVOY OF MINISTRY OF TRADE VEHICLES ENTERED FALLUJAH APRIL 19 TO DELIVER FOOD RATIONS WITHOUT INCIDENT.

3. (SBU) THE SURPRISE CLOSURE OF COTECNA'S OFFICE NEAR THE SYRIAN BORDER OF AL-WALEED WILL COMPLICATE MATTERS. CPA HAS RECEIVED REPORTS THAT THE SYRIAN MINISTRY OF THE FINANCE DIRECTED COTECNA STAFF TO DEPART IMMEDIATELY ON 21 APRIL, CLAIMING COTECNA'S LEGAL STATUS FOLLOWING THE TRANSFER OF THE OIL FOR FOOD PROGRAM FROM THE UNITED NATIONS TO CPA WAS NEVER CLARIFIED WITH THE SYRIAN GOVERNMENT. UNDER THE TERMS OF ITS CONTRACT, COTECNA WAS TO HAVE OPERATED INSPECTION OFFICES INSIDE IRAQ; SECURITY CONCERNS FOLLOWING THE WITHDRAWAL OF UN PERSONNEL NECESSITATED THE FIRM'S RELOCATION OUTSIDE IRAQ AT BORDER ENTRY POINTS. WE ARE WORKING TO FURTHER ASCERTAIN THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THIS CLOSURE AND CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES.

4. (SBU) UMM QASR OFFLOADING CAPACITY REMAINS A CHALLENGE. THE RATE OF DISCHARGE AT THE GRAIN TERMINAL WAS REPORTED TO HAVE REACHED 5,800 METRIC TONS APRIL 21. POWER UPGRADES ARE UNDERWAY TO ENHANCE CAPACITY AND ALLOW SUSTAINED USE OF ALL THREE EVACUATOR ARMS. ARRIVAL OF LEASED EVACUATORS HAS BEEN FURTHER DELAYED BY SHIPPING CONSTRAINTS, AND IS NOW EXPECTED TO BE DELIVERED MAY 8. CPA IS WORKING WITH THE MINISTRY OF TRADE AND MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION, THROUGH THE IRAQI PORT AUTHORITY, TO FACILITATE REPAIRS TO THE RONCUZZI EVACUATORS, WHICH ARE PROJECTED TO BE COMPLETED BY THE END OF APRIL. ALTERNATIVE OFFLOADING OPTIONS IN IRAN AND KUWAIT ARE ALSO UNDER CONSIDERATION.

5. (SBU) COMMENT: WE REMAIN IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH RELEVANT IRAQI MINISTRY OFFICIALS. DURING OUR NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING ON APRIL 24 WE EXPECT TO RECEIVE FURTHER UPDATES ON INTERNAL FOOD SHIPMENTS - WHICH, SO FAR, HAVE NOT BEEN HINDERED BY THE CURRENT SECURITY ENVIRONMENT. CONTINGENCY PLANS ARE IN PLACE SHOULD THE SITUATION DETERIORATE, AND CJTF-7 IS AWARE OF CONTINUED FOOD DELIVERY CONCERNS AND HAVE EXPRESSED A WILLINGNESS TO ASSIST IF NEEDED. END COMMENT.

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